

# XXV. Phonemes of Binumarien

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The segmental and suprasegmental phonemes of Binumarien are presented in this study in terms of their contrast, variation, and distribution.<sup>1</sup>

The Binumarien are a very small group. Within the memory of the older men, they were more numerous, but because of tribal fighting resulting in prolonged residence in the Markham Valley and resultant malaria, their numbers have been greatly reduced. Their neighbors to the west and south are the Gadsup, and to the north the Azera in the Markham Valley. The closely related language of Kambaira is to the southeast. The Binumarien are most closely related to the Tairora though some of the men speak Azera and Gadsup while others speak Gadsup and Tairora as well as their own language. All the men except the very old speak Neo-Melanesian.

<sup>1</sup>This paper was first published as pp. 13-21 in *Papers in New Guinea Linguistics*, No. 5, Linguistic Circle of Canberra Publications (Series A: Occasional Papers, No. 7) (Australian National University, 1967), and is re-issued here by permission. The data for this paper were collected by the authors during a stay of two and a half years in the village of Oníkurádarannai while working with the New Guinea Branch of the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

The Administration name for this group of people, Binumarien, was derived from a former village name Pinumaarénai. The people call themselves and the language Afaqina. A large number of informants was used during this time but two middle-aged men, Aaqti and the government-appointed chief, Maraaqaroo, were the principal ones. The tone analysis was done at a linguistic workshop under the direction of Dr. K. L. Pike. The outline for this paper was suggested by the theoretical framework of Pike (1967). Our informants at the workshop were Tata and Kuntaqpi. We wish to record our thanks to members of the institute for help with this analysis.

## 2. CONTRAST

2.1. *Contrast of Segmental Phonemes*

<i>p:p</i>	/putaá/ <sup>2</sup> 'rotten', /pukaá/ 'tobacco'; /upeékáa/ 'push into', /apeeka/ 'difficult'
<i>t:r</i>	/raqárárá/ 'will break', /táqárárá/ 'will cross river'; /páiráka/ type of tree, /paitáká/ type of frog
<i>t:s</i>	/patáa/ 'scrape', /pasaá/ type of bird; /túká/ 'root', /suká/ 'sour'
<i>k:q</i>	/ásáúku/ 'your hand', /ásáúqa/ 'old person'; /kukúma/ type of bird, /quqúsá/ 'fence'
<i>i:ee</i>	/pipá/ 'He's gone', /peepa/ 'arrow'; /paíní/ 'dog', /paééná/ red dye
<i>ii:ee</i>	/máriíqa/ 'I have been (there)', /máreeqa/ 'I took it.'
<i>u:oo</i>	/múná/ 'smoke', /moóná/ 'the next day'; /uróóna/ 'type of bird', /ooraúná/ type of bird
<i>uu:oo</i>	/qtóo/ 'OK!', /qtuú/ type of yam
<i>i:ii</i>	/máríno/ 'He stays', /máriino/ 'He has been staying'; /akííqa/ 'head', /ákíqtá/ 'pith (of sugar cane)'
<i>a:aa</i>	/mááqá/ 'house', /maqá/ 'ground'; /saaká/ 'sugar', /sáká/ 'fill with water'; /taáká/ type of tree, /táká/ 'frog'
<i>q:ø</i>	(word initially) /qáféqá/ 'I see', /ápéká/ 'difficult'; /ó/ 'mouth', /qol/ 'dividing line'; /quqúsá/ 'fence', /úqóná/ 'moon'

TABLE 64  
CHART OF PHONEMES

	Consonants			
	Bilabial	Alveolar	Velar	Glottal
Stops	<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>k</i>	<i>q</i>
Fricatives	<i>ɸ</i>	<i>s</i>		
Nasals	<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>		
Vibrant		<i>r</i>		
	Semivowels			
	<i>w</i>	<i>y</i>		
	Vowels			
	Front	Central	Back	
High	<i>i</i>		<i>u</i>	
Mid	<i>e*</i>		<i>o</i>	
Low		<i>a</i>		

\* The phonemes /e/ and /o/ never occur singly but only in geminate clusters.

<sup>2</sup> When two /a/ [aː] phonemes occur contiguously, the vowel quality is changed to [a].

## 2.2. Contrast of Tones

There are two phonemic tone levels, (h)igh and (l)ow. (Only high is marked.)<sup>3</sup>

l-h:h-h /iní murí máriqtánoo/ 'My lemon is here', /iní múrí máriqtánoo/ 'My mole is here.'

h-l:h-h /iní súmpa antáa/ 'Cut my sweet potato', /iní nántá antáa/ 'Cut my forest.'

l-h:l-l /iní saná suqáa/ 'Cook my taro', /iní paki suqáa/ 'Cook my gum.'

h-l:l-l /iní sáni máriqtánoo/ 'My stone axe is here', /iní aqti máriqtánoo/ 'My skin is here.'

h-h:l-l /iní táká suqáa/ 'Cook my frog' /iní paki suqáa/ 'Cook my gum.'

h-l:l-h /iní súmpa máriqtánoo/ 'My sweet potato is here' /iní murí máriqtánoo/ 'My lemon is here.'